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EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT:

HOW THE DEKALB COUNTY PRESS AFFECTED THE CALL TO ARMS DURING WORLD WAR ONE

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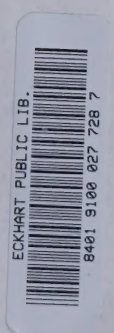

INTRODUCTION

On April 2, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson asked Congress for a declaration of war. Such an event was bound to affect the ordinary people of DeKalb County, Indiana, but just how deeply would it affect them? Would they rally 'round flag and country to support the troops? Would they "do their bit"?

I reviewed DeKalb County newspapers to determine what role the local press played in the call to arms for local and public support of the United States' involvement in World War One. I wanted to explore the relationship, if any, between each newspaper and its respective community in the mobilization to support the war effort, the home front, and the soldiers "over there." In doing so I learned that each newspaper reflected the flavor of its readers and the essence of the community it represented. In this paper I focus on how the various newspapers demonstrated support through their respective editorials/editorial cartoons, letters from the boys, advertising, and columns/articles.

The following newspapers were reviewed: Auburn Courier, St. Joe News, Waterloo Press, Butler Weekly Record, The Hamilton News, and Garrett Weekly Clipper. The Auburn Courier was a twice weekly newspaper; the others were weekly papers each published on various days of the week. The relevant time period was from March, 1917 through Armistice Day, November 11, 1918.

THE POLITICS OF IT ALL

Politics on the national level influenced our entry into the war. Politics on the local level should not be ignored. The intent of the political parties in the country was to put aside

politics and win the war. The undercurrent, however, kept politics alive on the national level and subsequently on the local level.

During the war years the DeKalb County newspapers were to a degree evenly made up of democrats and republicans. The editor/publisher of the Auburn Courier, J. Carl Sheil, was a Democrat and proudly boasted on his masthead that the Courier was the official Democratic newspaper of DeKalb County. L.H. Higley, editor/publisher of the Butler Weekly Record, disagreed with Sheil's declaration. Higley was strongly Republican and a conservative Christian but also felt himself to be "democratic." He maintained that neither the republicans nor the democrats could claim a genuine party paper in the county seat of Auburn.[1]

Fred B. Leichty of the St. Joe News was a Democrat and informed the readers of the Courier when he took over managing duties that he had no intention of changing the format or direction of the newspaper.[2] Herbert Willis of the Waterloo Press was a Republican, and in fact, won the election for State Representative just a few days before the war ended. Clif M. Johnston of The Hamilton News was a Republican, and C.B. Hamilton of the Garrett Weekly Clipper and later the Auburn Courier was a Democrat.

Prior to American entrance in the war, the newspapers all carried editorial comments which indicated that the United States should probably stay out of the war (for war's sake, if nothing else). As the atrocities grew worse, most newspapers took the position that although war was a horrible experience for all those concerned, it was beginning to look as though the United States might need to enter the war but now for the sake of liberty and to

right the wrongs being committed by the Kaiser.

The Auburn Courier, St. Joe News, Waterloo Press, Garrett Weekly Clipper, and The Hamilton News were very supportive of the war effort once the United States entered the war. The editor of the Butler Weekly Record was not as supportive of the war effort because he did not agree with American entrance into the war; that lack of support gave the Butler newspaper a different tone from the other newspapers.

Editor L.H. Higley was a controversial figure. He held strong beliefs and did not back down when those beliefs were challenged. Editor Higley in his Butler newspaper and whoever was editing the Courier had a running editorial battle concerning each other's publishing principals and ideals (or lack thereof). Although no war issues were discussed, it was a topic around which the two editors danced.

Higley was also at odds with Editor Hamilton of Garrett. The very essence of the two editors was very much to the opposite extremes. While Hamilton was at the Garrett Weekly Clipper, he was the liberal, union-supporting, Democrat on the west end of the county and Higley was the conservative, Bible-thumping, Republican on the east end of the county.

The editors did not openly argue about the war on a partisan basis. Instead, they argued about other issues (such as prohibition and cigarettes) which were avenues to vent their disagreements but which clearly did not violate the atmosphere of the time to not regard one's politics in this time of war.

For the first month reviewed, the Auburn Courier was edited

and published by J. Carl Shiel. Fred B. Leichty of the St. Joe News took over management of the Courier from May through November 1, 1917, and finally C.B. Hamilton took over permanent duties as editor on November 1, 1917, until the end of the time period reviewed. The St. Joe News was edited and published by Fred Leichty until he went to the Courier. He continued to own the St. Joe newspaper while his wife, Lora Leichty, edited the St. Joe News from May through October, when Leichty eventually returned. The Garrett Weekly Clipper was edited and published by C.B. Hamilton who took control of the Auburn Courier on November 1, 1917, following Leichty. Hamilton continued in his position at the Weekly Clipper but added the duties of editor and publisher of the Courier. Hamilton noted, however, that there would be no conflict between the newspapers: The Courier had a large circulation all over the county and specialized in county seat news; the Garrett Clipper always had and would continue to cater to the people of Garrett and the west end of the county.

Herbert C. Willis edited and published The Waterloo Press, L.H. Higley edited and published the Butler Weekly Record, and Clif M. Johnston edited and published The Hamilton News.

Brief mention is also made of two other newspapers in the county, as they were available, during the relevant time period: the Auburn Evening Star (same editorial staff as the Auburn Courier) and the Auburn Evening Dispatch.

"PRIVATE OPINIONS PUBLICLY EXPRESSED"[3]

The opinions of the respective editors, through editorial comment as well as the selection of particular news items and

editorial cartoons, were fairly easy to detect. Formal editorial comments were printed by editors Willis, Hamilton (at the Clipper), and Johnston in their respective newspapers. The St. Joe News and the Auburn Courier, while under the management of Fred Leichty, published editorial opinion often in the appearance of one-liners or small articles such as "Have you registered, young man?"[4] and "Uncle Sam expects everyone to do his bit regardless of nationality."[5]

Editorials published in The Hamilton News are summed up in such topics as good Americans should be on guard because the nation is at war; don't be slackers, any of you; buy liberty bonds; watch the growing crops; and don't waste fuel.

On May 18, 1917, The Hamilton News published one editorial entitled "How Germany Expects to Win" which offered the opinion that Germany intended to win the war because it was well known that the allies did not have enough food to last if America continued its present rate of consumption. It further explained that these comments were not intended to apply to "some other place" but to our community.

Many of the editorials of the Waterloo Press focused on the newspaper's main thrust of buying liberty bonds. Very early on Willis supported liberty bonds and encouraged his readers to buy them, although he disapproved of the government's advertising campaign, saying that it looked cheap and could have been done better.[6] He also wrote many editorials about the secondary topic of interest to the newspaper, the Red Cross, such as the good works done by the volunteers. He believed everyone should support the

Red Cross through time and/or money.[7]

In addition to his own opinions, Willis published editorials written by others, including university professors. Many of the Indiana University professors' editorial comments appeared in the Waterloo Press. Professor James A. Woodburn, Head of the Department of History at Indiana University wrote an editorial which compared the Kaiser to another German, King George III of England. It was Professor Woodburn's opinion that Americans should not forget that what the Kaiser had done in Germany was minimal compared to what George III had done in the colonies and everyone remembers the response to George III's tyranny.[8]

C.B. Hamilton at the Garrett Weekly Clipper published editorials about the Red Cross, the necessity to support it and the good work done by its members. These editorials were all very much like the editorials of the Waterloo Press in support of the Red Cross.

Editor Hamilton, however, exhibited a strong anti-German sentiment toward the residents of Garrett of German parentage, some of whom were supportive of the fatherland up until the United States' entry into the war. Of those Germans in Garrett, some were already naturalized citizens, some filed their declarations of intention to become citizens once the United States entered the war, and the remainder, said Hamilton, should heed the advice of the Attorney General of the United States who said if they obeyed the law and kept quiet, there would be no problems.

Because Garrett was so heavily dependent upon the railroad, the general demeanor of the Weekly Clipper was in support of the

railroad workers. Hamilton believed if they needed to strike during the war for better wages, Garrett should support them.

The Butler Weekly Record had few formal editorials and those were mostly in the form of small articles or catchy phrases. When the editor of the Weekly Record did publish an editorial, he was definitely not supporting of the war effort due to his conservative Christian convictions. He was against cigars and cigarettes, and for prohibition. He strongly believed that the innocent young men of DeKalb County would return from war with broken down moral values solely based on the notion that the government would make them addicts of cigarettes and alcohol and because of the already poor moral character of the Europeans with which they would come into contact while "over there."

It was not surprising, therefore, when Higley had one scathing editorial about the apparent lack of moral character of the women of the M.E. Methodist church in Auburn for having the audacity to pass out cigarettes to the recruits after a well-attended, delicious meal for the men prior to their departure for camp. Higley declared himself appalled that the United States government provided cigarettes to the soldiers as a matter of course in their ration packs, let alone that the M.E. Methodist women would pass out cigars and cigarettes to the soldiers "in the M.E. church."[9]

In contrast Garrett editor Hamilton ran advertising for Berghof Beer and Lucky Strike cigarettes and attempted to rally the Garrett citizens to stop prohibition because local business would suffer.

Most of the articles in the Butler Weekly Record about the war were from the wire services (the same articles often appeared in the other newspapers as well), but the additional paragraphs or small articles supporting various components of the war effort were lacking in the Weekly Record. There were many editions of the Butler newspaper that did not have any war-related information in them. What was also obvious was the selected bits of information and news items which were indicative of an anti-war position. On May 18, 1917, for example, Editor Higley stated he believed it would be a mistake to send an army to Europe because the Germans were not making active warfare on the United States, so why should this nation make warfare on them? Editor Higley continued this attitude when, on August 10, 1917, he printed an editorial about the Red Cross and other organizations. He believed these organizations were treating soldiers in such a manner as they might begin to think war was a picnic--until they were in the trenches and a shell dropped on them. In addition, Higley had several editorial comments about those blood-thirsty heathens, the Turks, and while that alone was a significant reason to hate Turkey, the fact that Germany was an ally of Turkey was sufficient reason to fight Germany.

Editor Hamilton at Garrett did not use any wire service articles about the war; however, every issue contained information about the war as it pertained to the local people, whether it was letters from soldiers, Conscription Board information, or articles about the local men who had volunteered.

The editorial cartoons selected by each editor were also

indicative of each editor's position on the war. For the most part the editorial cartoons were provided by the wire services and were reprints from major newspapers (i.e. Washington Star, Baltimore American, Indianapolis News, Dayton News, and London Opinion); the selection was of importance for the mood of the newspaper. Many of the editorial cartoons appeared at various times in more than one of the county newspapers.

The Hamilton News had very few editorial cartoons. The only one of significance related to liberty bonds in the October 26, 1917, edition which pushed liberty bonds via advertising sponsored by local advertisers.

The Butler Weekly Record used few editorial cartoons, but they reflected mainstream support for war efforts such as an anti-slacker cartoon[10], disapproval of food speculators[11], and jabs at bums who did not carry their weight.[12] "The Shot Heard 'Round the World" was a popular theme for many editorial cartoons, variously representing the industrial strength of the United States or the Spirit of '76 and the United States War for Independence.

The editors at the Waterloo Press and the Auburn Courier used many editorial cartoons and often had more than one in each edition to emphasize such things as the evils of food speculation, the need for growing crops for the survival of all, buying liberty bonds, and demonstrating a strong volunteerism attitude.

HELP WIN THE WAR

The newspapers supported, in their own way, all aspects of the home front, whether it was victory gardens or the Red Cross. Of the newspapers reviewed, the majority had a theme or focus for

the war time publications. The Auburn Courier supported victory gardens, St. Joe News supported the Red Cross, Waterloo Press supported liberty bonds primarily and the Red Cross secondarily. The farmers were supported during the war by The Hamilton News. Although the Garrett Weekly Clipper had no strong theme like the others, it was the most outstanding county newspaper for the in-depth local aspect of the war. Only the Butler Weekly Record did not have a particular theme.

The Waterloo Press during the time period being discussed was a supporter of the Red Cross but not nearly as strongly as the St. Joe paper. As a show of support for the Red Cross, the Press changed its nameplate during the war, initially putting a large and very noticible "+" on each side of the nameplate from April 1917 until November 1917. The newspaper then changed the logo to the emblem for the Red Cross which appeared on the nameplate from November 1917 until early April 1918. The nameplate logo then changed to a cross with a box around it on each side of the nameplate.

The main thrust of the Press, however, was liberty loans. Support for the liberty loans was shown in a number of ways. Editor Willis repeatedly made pleas that even if you could not enlist, your money could. He published numerous articles and editorials about individual sacrifice in the purchase of liberty bonds. On June 27, 1918, President Wilson's proclamation about war savings stamps was published, and the editorial was devoted to a complete description of the new war savings stamps, how they were used, where to purchase them, and the name of the first person in

Waterloo who bought some.

The Courier emphasized the victory garden as its "pet project" for the war. During the time period reviewed, the Courier published many articles about potatoes, the staple which would sustain the country throughout the war. The Courier informed people where to get seed potatoes, how and when to plant them, how much they cost, and generally encouraged everyone to plant potatoes and other foodstuffs in every vacant lot. There were several articles about the "army fighting on its belly" and the issue was addressed at the first patriotic rally in Auburn, as noted by Attorney C.M. Brown who spoke of the need to plant more food crops.[13]

If the other county newspapers were overly enthusiastic, the Butler Weekly Record was only moderately so. The Weekly Record did not take a particular stand to support a certain aspect of the home front during the war. It used many of the wire service articles about the war but produced nothing original.

The St. Joe News had as its main issue the support of the Red Cross movement. This continued under the direction of Editor Fred Leichty and Editor Lora Leichty. This paper was so enthusiastic for the Red Cross and the people of DeKalb County that after reading several editions of the paper in those months, one feels a definite sense of pride and privilege for being a resident of the county and has the urge to go out and join the Red Cross.

The Hamilton News supported the farmers in their effort to help the war. The News published more notices of farm meetings to learn better production methods than other newspapers in the

county. The propaganda of the government (as it related to farming and farmers) was more evident in the News than in the other county newspapers. As early as the April 27, 1917, edition, The Hamilton News published one-line editorials about both the president and the governor asking the support and patriotism of the farmers by planting more crops. The State Food Director issued regular statements advising how to plant, soil conditions appropriate for the various crops, and so on, and these articles appeared in regularly The Hamilton News. The News was also the only newspaper to sponsor a five-acre corn growing contest. "Wheat Meetings" were regularly scheduled for the Hamilton area to encourage the production of wheat by local farmers to help with the bread shortage in Europe. County Agent H.R. Smalley ran a notice in the May 25, 1917, edition that if the farmer needed additional labor to contact him for locating men and boys who were willing to work.

The Garrett Weekly Clipper was definitely the most original in its presentation of the war. It primarily emphasized the Red Cross, following the Waterloo Press example by putting the "+" on the left side of the nameplate and placing a flying Red Cross flag on the right side. This was done for a few months in 1917. The paper then took a different tack and eliminated the logos on each side of the nameplate and instead put various slogans above the nameplate. Beginning in late 1918 it placed the slogan "Have You Bought Liberty Loans" above the name of the paper and periodically changed the slogan for various causes. It was original because since it was composed of mostly local news, it had more detail on

each event. Rather than saying a patriotic rally was held and giving basic information, the Weekly Clipper was able to provide more detailed articles. Each entry in a parade was described in detail as were the individual names of the people involved in each entry. Often photographs were provided for flag raisings and rallies.

"SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE"

Once the soldiers were in combat, they were not allowed to disclose their exact location, hence the "somewhere in France" heading on most letters. Each newspaper published letters from soldiers, Red Cross nurses or volunteers, doctors, or any other local person even remotely involved in the war effort. Some were from missionary workers in the Philipines whose only war-related activity was occasionally to see troop ships.[14]

Each newspaper printed a notice requesting readers to bring letters from soldiers to the newspaper; the editor promised to print what he could subject to limitations of censorship and personal notes omitted. The Garrett Weekly Clipper elaborated on its request for letters from relatives by stating that these were the "real intimate descriptions of war--the fascinating details of the fighting business."[15]

The purposes of publishing these letters were many. First and foremost, they sold newspapers. But just as importantly these letters showed each community that DeKalb County men were actively fighting the oppression caused by the Germans; to boast, if you will, what our boys were doing to beat the Kaiser. Secondly, they demonstrated that the mothers and fathers of DeKalb County had not raised sons who were slackers, their boys were doing their "bit."

This then had the effect of helping to increase volunteers for the draft. In addition, the letters increased awareness of the needs of the troops so that more people would buy liberty loans to provide support. Finally, as in the case of the Garrett Weekly Clipper which did not use wire service articles, the true details of war could be seen from the eyes of local soldiers; men they knew who would tell them the truth about what was really going on "over there."

The content of the letters from the ordinary rank and file were much the same. For the first several months of a soldier's life, the soldier was stationed at various cantonments at places like Hattiesburg, Mississippi, and Louisville, Kentucky. The soldiers wrote of the things they were doing for training, but many of the letters contained descriptions of work involved in erecting new buildings for barracks and other necessary construction. Many of the soldiers who wrote home never left the United States because they were trained for jobs which would become a part of the massive support system to keep the army going.

On the interesting side, however, the Courier obtained copies of letters from a relative of an Auburn man, Harry Western, a citizen of Canada who had emigrated here. Other family members lived in DeKalb County, too, but Western had two brothers in the Canadian armed forces and his father was a recruiting officer in Canada. Western allowed publication of letters he received from Canadian friends. The first letter concluded with "and the weather is fine"[16] which is indicative of the light treatment still given the war early on. As time passed, however, the letters from

friends became more gruesome and detailed. One friend of Western's described war as the realization of "Dante's Inferno."[17] He began to write of the death he saw all around him. His friends were dying, often several at a time. He spoke of the injured Germans they helped once the battles were over. After the battles were ended the wounded and dying were merely the wounded and dying, regardless of which side of the trench they were on and the soldiers worked together to assist each other. This aspect of the war was not depicted in government propaganda and thus, not in the local press. These were not the merciless, "Godless Huns" to which the government propaganda referred, but men, simply men.

The most poignant of the letters to Western described the death of a fellow soldier. "He stooped to whisper something to me; I just forgot what now, and another bullet whizzed by. Ray crumpled up and fell forward. He was shot through the kidneys."[18] Corporal Ray Brown died at the battle of Vimy Ridge. He should be remembered.

Harry Western was called to service by the British government in November 1917, but because of a gap in the newspapers available I was not able to learn what happened to him.

Dr. Glenn D. Ransom of Hamilton wrote letters back to the editor of The Hamilton News and to his wife, all of which were published. He wrote first from the Army Medical School in Washington, DC. He reported that as far as he was concerned, "Hamilton is still sleeping" compared to Washington, with regard to the mobilization for war[19]. Dr. Ransom's letters present the war from an army surgeon's point of view. When he first arrived in

England on September 7, 1917, he was assistant surgeon in a convalescent hospital with 370 beds. Some time later, Ransom was transferred to France with a hospital unit. In June 1918 he was decorated by the French government for bravery. All through the summer of 1918 he was on active duty with a regimental unit as the medical officer to a Scottish unit. Ransom died October 26, 1918, on a front line with the 5th Battalion Cameron Highlanders and he was buried in a military cemetery just outside Haringe, Belgium. He left behind a wife, whom he clearly loved judging from the published letters he sent to her, and two children, ages three and one. Dr. Glenn D. Ransom was 32 years old.

The St. Joe News published letters from local soldiers beginning the first of July, 1917, until the end of the war. The letter writers include a Garrett boy, Chester Boves, who arrived in England in September 1917 and hoped to be home by the Fourth of July, 1918.

The Garrett Weekly Clipper published letters from Charles Gard, reported to be the first DeKalb County man who had crossed the water and was in France. (Several others made the same claim to fame). One of the first letters Gard sent back arrived "scratched and besmeared by the blue indelible pencil, parts cut out, and on the front marked 'OK' and signed by some Frenchman."[20] Private Gard reported they had a hearty welcome from the French when they landed. He was later reported killed in action on July 30, 1918, but his family received a letter on August 20, 1918, from him saying he was wounded in the arm by a Hun bullet going "over the top" but was otherwise all right.

DO YOUR BIT

The local press further showed support for the call to arms by the advertising each newspaper carried. By running advertisements that depicted people wearing uniform-type clothing, military-type hats, and with an American flag flying in the background the local press could rally additional support for the war effort in more subtle ways; ways of which perhaps even the readers were not aware.

Upon the declaration of war some local advertisers jumped on the band wagon and started using a war theme. By the end of the war, nearly every advertiser had some ad or series of ads that reflected the war atmosphere in the county.

The various audiences sought by local merchants depended on the product or services offered by the merchant. Grocery stores ads had an audience that would include nearly everyone. "It's War!" declared Oberlin's Grocery Company[21] in its advertisement for seeds and other items for people's victory gardens. Oberlin's continued throughout the war to promote war efforts in their overall advertising campaign. An indicative of the eastside/ westside county differences, the Ross & Hayes Grocers of Garrett advertisement of July 12, 1917, was almost on the flip side of Oberlin's. Ross & Hayes were courageous enough to place advertising stating that men who do the biggest things in the world needed to eat meat if they were going to get the work done. Ross & Hayes advertised "without fear of contraction" that they had meat for consumers. This advertising position was very gutsy considering the "Meatless-Wheatless" campaign of the federal government and

considering that every newspaper in the county, including the Garrett Weekly Clipper, pushed it heavily. This was, however, the only time Ross & Hayes advertised quite so strong a theme during the war. The remainder of their advertising during the war was more in line with the other advertisers. A similar audience and was reached by McEntarfer Dry Goods in Waterloo which took a slightly different approach by accepting liberty bonds as payment on charge accounts.[22]

The Boston Store and People's Clothing and Shoe Store in Auburn reached the people who purchased finer clothing. People's declared a 50% refund on purchases made by men of men's summer suits or shoes if they were called to the service of the country.[23] By Armistice Day on November 11, 1918, Schaab and Brother Company (a department store) placed a large ad displaying an American flag and the bold print "Let's All Stand Up and Sing 'Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow'."[24]

As the war was nearing its end, the need for wood to be used as gun stocks and airplane propellers was evident in an ad soliciting sales of walnut trees. This would be a very limited audience, yet the need was great and the patriotic would respond.[25]

The Sheets Studio in Garrett took an interesting position with its advertising. They targeted soldiers and their families when they advertised that if one had a soldier in the family one would be prudent to have his photograph taken before he left. After all, it could have been some months before he was seen again and it would have been a comfort for the family to be able to look at his

photo while he was away. Also, Sheets suggested it might not be a bad idea to have the family's photograph taken so that the soldier could have a photo to take with him.[26] The underlying message, of course, was if one had the soldier's photograph taken before he leaves, one will have a photo if he does not return. Around Christmas time the Sheets Studio advertised that it would be a precious gift for sweethearts, mothers, and fathers to have their photographs taken and sent to the soldier. At the time, most families did not have cameras to take photographs themselves. Toward the end of the war, however, Geddes Drug Store in Butler informed amateur photographers who did have their own cameras that it carried Kodak accessories.[27]

The Garrett Fruit Company advertised that cigars and cigarettes were a welcome gift from home for Christmas, and they offered to package the gift to guarantee safe arrival to the soldier.[28] While The Hamilton News and Waterloo Press had Lucky Strike advertising, there was no advertising in the Butler newspaper for gifts of tobacco products.

Each time a liberty loan drive took place, local merchants sponsored advertisements for liberty bonds. A small article related that several local merchants purchased advertising space because the sale of a particular issue of liberty bonds closed on a certain date, and it was essential that the liberty bonds be purchased. The article would usually ask the buyer to remember that the men who were now in the service were watching to see if residents spent their money wisely and bought liberty bonds to destroy the Kaiser.

National advertisers such as Wrigley's chewing gum ran advertisements featuring soldiers as early as April 19, 1917. The ads featured sailors and soldiers and became much more supportive of the war effort as the war continued. By the end of the war, Wrigley's advertising (in fact an ad that ran on Armistice Day) did not even mention buying gum for Americans on the home front; it merely asked for patience in the stateside supply of gum because the company supplies were being sent to the boys "over there."

As early as April 1917, there was advertising for Boschee's German Syrup (a tonic that will cure what ails you). Boschee's continued with the advertising campaign through the end of the war. However, the ad (although basically the same throughout the war) changed mildly as the war progressed. First, an extra line was added which stated "Made in America." Shortly thereafter that was expanded to say "Made in America for over 50 years," but the name of the product never changed. These ads appeared in all the county newspapers.

The messages given by the various newspaper editors were that citizens should all do their bit, they should buy liberty bonds, war savings stamps, and thrift stamps; that they should, in general, practice thrift. However, as an advertiser it was difficult to solicit for people to spend money on anything when all the potential customers were being inundated with the message of thrift. For example, automobile manufacturers continued to advertise, but none carried a war theme. After all, how can an automobile manufacturer justify the purchase of a luxury item such as a new automobile? But by and large there were not a significant

number of advertisers who did not include a war theme in the advertising and most did exactly what Wrigley's gum did by alternating between war theme ads and non-war theme ads.

"DAILY NEWS"

The frequent news and types of articles to appear in the county newspapers usually concerned the local men who enlisted, food conservation, flag raisings, patriotic rallies, and the activities of the Conscription Board, but the content of those articles is significant. The articles which frequently appeared supported the cause which was the focus of the newspaper. The regular columns which were published promoted various aspects of the war effort or listed the names of people who had donated to the Red Cross or bought liberty bonds, thus using intimidation to get people into action.

Most of the county newspapers carried condensed state news in columns called "Local Happenings" or "Indiana News Tersely Told." These were long columns listing many items such as the naming of a new school superintendent for a school district and listing the activities of local chapters of lodges. Among these were examples of the more subtle ways to influence the readers, such as The Kaiser Hotel, owned and operated by John Kaiser in Churubusco. The name was changed to the Liberty Hotel.[29]

The St. Joe News, The Hamilton News, and Waterloo Press carried columns titled "Who's Who in the World" and/or "In the Limelight" which featured each week information about three or four people, Americans and Europeans, who in some way helped the war effort. One column described former President Theodore Roosevelt's

two daughters, one of whom was married to a doctor and worked by his side in France to help wounded soldiers.

The "What Can We Do?" column prepared by the American Red Cross appeared in the St. Joe News, The Hamilton News, Garrett Weekly Clipper, and Waterloo Press. This column gave women suggestions for assisting in the war effort, even on a minimal level such as food preparations and storage which helped save food, clothing which could be sewn or knitted for the men, or donations of cash that could be solicited from individuals and businesses.

The Hamilton News published a column called "Self-Help for New Soldiers" which focused on such issues as how to stand and salute and why; health of the soldier; the uniform and what it meant. Also The Hamilton News published the article "Home Readings for the Citizen-Soldier" which educated those at home about a soldier's life.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Once again the role of the local press to rally the support of the citizens of the county could be seen in the way other issues were presented in the newspapers. The Conscription Board played such a significant role in the call to arms that articles about it appeared in virtually every edition of every newspaper. Local scandals created not only more newspaper sales but in their own way also provided the local press with a source of commentary on the war. Marriage and slackers seemed to go hand in hand and both were visible means for attack by the local press.

Conscript or Volunteer, Which Will You Be?

On May 3, 1917, by order of the President of the United

States, and by authority of Indiana Governor Goodrich, the DeKalb County Conscription Board was named. By law, the Board consisted of the County Sheriff, Frank Baltz; the Clerk of the Courts, Walter W. Mountz; and a citizen of the county, Issac Zent (who was at the time Vice-President of City National Bank in Auburn). The law was changed shortly thereafter, requiring the third member of the Board to be a medical doctor. Mr. Zent resigned and Dr. U.G. Sauder was appointed as the third member. In July 1917 it was realized that Mr. Mountz was of conscriptable age and had in fact registered for the draft as required. A new rule established that a person of conscriptable age could not serve on the Board, therefore, Mr. Mountz named as his replacement Warren Austin, the former Clerk of the Courts. Mr. Austin was later confirmed by the governor. Assisting Dr. Souder in making examinations were Dr. King of Garrett and Dr. Shumaker of Waterloo. These men put in many long hours without monetary compensation.

Allegations were made that politics was involved in decisions made by the Board, in that one's political affiliation might influence the Board members regarding the eligibility of men for the draft.[30] The editor of the Waterloo Press defended the Board and noted that all men who met the requirements for exemption, regardless of their politics, were duly exempted. The editor blasted the unnamed rumormongers for not coming forward with any evidence and giving it to the proper officials so that the allegations could be investigated. Mr. Willis, the editor of the Waterloo Press, was also appointed as the government appeals agent designated to prosecute exemption cases in DeKalb County on

behalf of the federal government. The Conscription Board was also defended by the editor of the Garrett Weekly Clipper on at least two occasions.[31]

Other allegations were made to the State Conscription Agent Jesse Eschbach charging the DeKalb County Conscription Board with exempting too many registrants and intimating that partiality was shown. The complaint, made by Chastine Johnston, was forwarded to Herbert Willis for further investigation. Mr. Johnston signed an affidavit for Willis which indicated that a man named Almond Burns had been exempted by the county board on the ground of having a dependent wife. The affidavit further stated that Mrs. Burns supported herself and worked outside the home in order to pay the rent. It was later learned that Burns was beyond the age of conscription and therefore was not under the authority of the Conscription Board. Because Johnston had executed a sworn statement, he was later indicted for perjury by a DeKalb County grand jury. The case was thrown out by the DeKalb Circuit Court by Judge Link who claimed the issue of raising an army was a matter of the federal government and the local court had no jurisdiction. Slightly different charges were then filed and a second grand jury indicted Johnston. The Special Prosecutor refiled in order that an appeal could be made to the appropriate court. The matter was later decided in favor of Johnston; however, it is indicative of the heated emotions involved with the issue of conscription and politics.[32]

Scandal at the Red Cross

Mrs. Raymond Stewart was indicated by the same grand jury

that indicted Mr. Johnston. The allegations against Mrs. Stewart were that she had embezzled eighty dollars from the Auburn branch of the Red Cross. Mrs. Stewart had staged a play for the benefit of the Red Cross with the organization receiving seventy percent of the net proceeds and thirty percent to Mrs. Stewart. Certain officers of the Red Cross asserted that Mrs. Stewart made no exact accounting of the proceeds and the matter was taken before the December 1917 term of the grand jury. The prosecution claimed the woman was one of those people preying upon others under the guise of a worthy cause. The attorneys for the defense said this was "only a little trouble between women who had no business experience or judgment"[33] but that Mrs. Stewart had no intention of keeping any of the money. The case was presented to Special Judge C.A. Yotter in the DeKalb Circuit Court to a crowded courtroom each day. According to the St. Joe News the sympathy of those present was with Mrs. Stewart and upon reading the not guilty verdict (the jury deliberated fifteen minutes) the crowd gave an ovation and applauded Mrs. Stewart. Editor Leichty believed this to have been a great waste of taxpayers money, time, and effort.[34]

"Wooed to Wed"[35]

Applications for marriage licenses in DeKalb County increased from mid-March 1917, and broke a record in April, 1917. They leveled off to normal levels by the end of 1917, but it appears that the local press chose to ignore that any man from the county could be a "slacker" for that reason.

Each newspaper pointed out that in other cities, men were "hiding behind women's skirts" by hurriedly applying for marriage

licenses. Each newspaper further blatantly referred to these men as slackers and anti-American. Yet every wedding announcement which appeared in the paper mentioned the lovely wedding ceremony which took place between a popular county woman and a well-known local man. The announcement would usually mention that the groom was a farmer (just as many farmers surfaced as did grooms because of the exempt status for farmers). Some notices mentioned that the friends and families were surprised about the marriage. There were many notices of elopers with Hillsdale, Michigan being a favorite destination, but none of the newspapers mention why.

At the same time there were many articles about the long lines at the Cook County, Illinois (Chicago) clerk's office to obtain marriage licenses and that these men were obviously slackers. Recruiting officers handed out yellow lapel ribbons for the slackers as they waited in line for licenses. But the men of DeKalb County were not chastised in the press except by Mr. Sheil at the Auburn Courier who called the young men with a sudden interest in marriage "benedicts" who were marrying to avoid, if possible, military service. He did give credit to the few couples who had been planning marriage for some time before the war and states these men did not deserve the name of slacker.[36]

"No Room for Slackers"[37]

Part of the job of the Conscription Board was to go after the slackers and deserters who failed to abide by the law. On one occasion which involved two Garrett men, the local Conscription Board sent a telegram to Flint, Michigan, authorities and asked them to be on the lookout for Clyde A. Brown and Fred E. Peters and

arrest them if found. Flint authorities located the men, but they escaped from the Flint police. They were eventually caught and put on a train back to Auburn and jailed pending departure to Camp Taylor. Brown's wife wrote a letter to the exemption board advising them that if Brown asked to be exempted on account of being the sole support of his wife, not to allow the exemption because he had not supported her for some months and in fact always asked her for money. Peters offered no explanation as to the confusion regarding his title of slacker, but maintained he had in fact registered. Both men claimed (from the county jail) that they were more than willing to serve their country.

This example is indicative of every newspaper in the county printing the names of the men they believed to be slackers, whether or not they were. Eventually there began to appear notices in the various newspapers that all those men who were rejected for service would receive from the government a lapel button saying "Exempted - United States," to show that they were not slackers, but were exempt.

"DEVIL RESIGNS"

Newspapers subtly influenced the local opinion about the war by publishing poems, letters, telegrams to or about the Kaiser. Nearly every newspaper printed poems that slammed the Kaiser, that told of the devil resigning and the Kaiser taking the job, and other not-so-nice mention of the Kaiser.

The Hamilton News had essay contests for various war- related topics such as "What Are We Fighting For?", and "The Conservation of Food." Winnings essays were published on the front

page of the newspaper.

CONCLUSION

The local press played a significant role in the call to arms for local and public support of the United States involvement in World War I. Through editorials, advertising, letters from the soldiers, and overall content of the county newspapers, the local press sought to mobilize the local public support for the efforts of the nation. Each of the newspapers in the county, through their respective editors, brought to light the atmosphere prevalent in the county during the Great War. Each newspaper reflected the essential character and the very substance of the community it represented and how the citizens of each community gladly worked for the war effort.

Before I began the research on this project, I fully expected to see the enthusiastic, gala atmosphere that existed at the beginning of the war turn into a solemn, grim tone by the war's end, and certainly by the time the casualty lists began appearing. That did not happen. The first three or four months of the United States' involvement there were virtually no American soldiers on foreign soil because they were in training. Once the nation had men "over there", the casualty lists came out daily; however, none of the newspapers published the lists as a matter of course, although The Evening Star may have published at least a partial list. Occasionally there were references to the casualty list pointing out that a soldier whose name appeared on the list had DeKalb County connections (an uncle lived in Butler or an aunt in Garrett, for example). When a DeKalb County man died, a story

appeared on the front page of most of the papers; sometimes the Garrett Weekly Clipper would publish a photo, if available. As in previous wars, however, more men died of disease then bullets. Many DeKalb County men died before ever leaving the United States, often with their parents at their side because the family had been summoned when the soldier became ill with influenza. These men who died of disease were still heralded as having "died for the colors" even if they never made it out of camp. Perhaps it was as Dr. Ransom wrote, that DeKalb County was "still sleeping" and not fully aware of the total effect of war.

When the war ended and the Armistice was declared, most of the county newspapers published huge headlines on the front page. The Evening Star published a special edition with the terms of surrender and Armistice. The St. Joe News did not put any article about the end of the war until page 6; however, in defense of the News, by the time it published its weekly edition, the war's end was "old news" for that week. Soon the newspapers in DeKalb County went back to publishing the local community news, church news, and school events, and the editors of the Garrett Weekly Clipper and Butler Weekly Record again began jousting on the issues of politics, prohibition, and cigarettes. The old adage proves true in DeKalb County: the more things changed, the more they stayed the same.

NOTES

1. Butler Weekly Record, April 27, 1917
2. The Evening Star, April 30, 1917
3. Waterloo Press titled its letters to the editor section "Private Opinions Publicly Expressed"
4. St. Joe News, June 14, 1917
5. Auburn Courier, May 11, 1917
6. Waterloo Press, May 31, 1917
7. Waterloo Press, June 14, 1917
8. Waterloo Press, October 4, 1917
9. Butler Weekly Record, September 7, 1917
10. Butler Weekly Record, August 17, 1917
11. Butler Weekly Record, August 24, 1917
12. Butler Weekly Record, September 7, 1917
13. Auburn Courier, April 10, 1917
14. The Hamilton News, August 31, 1917
15. Garrett Weekly Clipper, October 4, 1917
16. Auburn Courier, May 23, 1917
17. Auburn Courier, June 19, 1917
18. Auburn Courier, June 26, 1917
19. The Hamilton News, August 24, 1917
20. Garrett Weekly Clipper, July 26, 1917
21. Butler Weekly Record, April 24, 1917
22. Waterloo Press, June 27, 1917
23. Auburn Courier, June 26, 1917
24. The Evening Star, November 11, 1918
25. The Evening Star, July 20, 1918
26. Garrett Weekly Clipper, July 12, 1917
27. Butler Weekly Record, September 13, 1918
28. Garrett Weekly Clipper, November 29, 1917
29. St. Joe News, July 18, 1917
30. Waterloo Press, August 26, 1917
31. Garrett Weekly Clipper, September 6, 1917 and August 22 1918
32. One issue that is not clearly set out in the newspapers and would require additional investigation is the registration of the black men who lived in the county at the time. There were many black residents of Garrett. Most of the blacks in Garrett worked for the railroad in some capacity, whether as a clerk in the Baltimore and Ohio offices, as a waiter or waitress in the many cafes and luncheons for travelers, or in the railroad shops themselves. By law, the Conscription Board would have to register them as well. Because of the segregated military units, these black soldiers would not have served in the same units as the white soldiers from the county. On October 19, 1917, the Conscription Board received a notice from the State to verify the number of black men registered and the number eligible for conscription from DeKalb County. The Board reported that five men were eligible for

conscription. Further, the notice implied that black troops would be sent to France before white troops and the article on October 23, 1917, stated that perhaps the white men from DeKalb County would get a reprieve from duty in France if the government followed its plan to send black troops first.

There is periodic mention of black men asking for exemptions, or asking to have their records transferred to other states so that they could serve with black units with which they wanted to serve, and a couple of mentions of black men being slackers. Most of the instances of black men as slackers proved to be cases where the men were registered in other cities or states. These men lived in the boarding houses and clearly did not consider themselves residents of DeKalb County and were clearly not slackers. The blacks who were residents of the county would not have served in the same regiments as the whites and their patriotic service to this country is sadly neglected.

33. Garrett Weekly Clipper, January 24, 1918

34. St. Joe News, January 24, 1917

35. Auburn Courier, May 4, 1917

36. "No Room for Slackers" was the title of an entry in the patriotic parade on October 3, 1917, in Auburn sponsored by the Entre Nous Club.

37. "Wooed to Wed" was the title of the column in the Auburn Courier for the marriage license applications.

WORKS CITED

Auburn Courier,* March 1917-November 1918**. A good newspaper for geneological research. (E)***

Butler Weekly Record, March 1917-November 1918. (E)

The Evening Star, March 1917-November 1918 (as available). Not all editions of this newspaper are available. They are scattered and in poor condition.

Garrett Weekly Clipper, March 1917-November 1918. Good source for local news, many photographs are printed in this newspaper. (G)

The Hamilton News, March 1917-November 1918. (E)

St. Joe News, March 1917-November 1918. (E)

Waterloo Press, March 1917-November 1918. A good newspaper for political (especially Republican) issues going on in the county at the time). (E) (W)

*Due to the exclusive use of microfilm for this research, the poor quality of the newspapers to begin with, and the early microfilm techniques, many page numbers or other important information was not available. I have included whatever information was available but regret any inconvenience this may cause future researchers.

**Each of the newspapers was reviewed from March 1917 through November 1918. Specific dates used in this paper are listed either in the body of the text or in the end notes.

***The information was available at Eckhart Public Library in Auburn (designated with an "E"), the Garrett Public Library (designated with "G"), and the Waterloo-Grant Township Library (W).

Eckhart Public Library

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